



End of year review 2021/22



End of year review 2021/22 – The five North East Strategic Economic Plan programmes

Business and Sector Growth: Business Growth

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Raise levels of business growth and ambition.

Deliver ongoing communications activity to encourage business engagement with the North East Growth Hub and to inspire entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses. The communications activity will deliver 17,850 light touch interventions.

Through organic, digital marketing and our triage team we delivered a total of 22,488 light touch interventions.

Increase demand for external business support and finance.

Increase the capacity of the North East Growth Hub to deliver:

- 915 medium intensity interventions
- 580 high intensity interventions to businesses with scaleup potential

This support will deliver:

- 750 additional jobs, of which 490 will be better jobs
- £21.9 million additional GVA

We increased our team of Growth Hub Connectors from four permanent members of staff to nine.

The North East Growth Hub delivered:

- 949 medium intensity interventions
- 664 high intensity interventions to businesses with scaleup potential

This high intensity support is forecast to deliver:

- 1,248 additional jobs, of which 686 are better jobs
- £54,735,508 million additional GVA

These interactions achieved a customer satisfaction rate of 96%.

Introduce a triage team to service inbound enquiries and carry out outbound lead generation and intelligence gathering activities.

We formally established a triage team with two advisers.

The triage team has delivered 2349 outreach calls to encourage business engagement with the North East Growth Hub and gather intelligence. This activity generated 214 appointments for the Connectors and 192 North East Growth Hub newsletter sign ups.

Integrate the sector teams and sector delivery plans with the North East Growth Hub.

Each Growth Hub Connector was assigned a sectoral responsibility. Significant activity has been taking place across each of our priority sectors to deepen relationships with businesses and to gather intelligence on their needs and opportunities which is being fed into steering groups. This approach is also increasing the uptake of business support by businesses in priority sectors and identifying ways in which they can contribute to sector strategy.

<p>Introduce a new approach to business segmentation, diagnostics and brokerage that better identifies and focuses on account management through the Growth Hub Connectors and scaleup partners, with the businesses who can deliver impact.</p>	<p>The new segmentation and diagnostic tool framework and methodology was developed by North East LEP team and software development has been procured and will be live in the new financial year.</p>
<p>Ensure the supply of external business support and finance matches the needs of businesses and the economy.</p>	
<p>Work with government and regional partners to support the development of, and transition to, a new business support and sector development landscape.</p>	<p>We continue to work closely with the North East Business Support Provider Network - a forum bringing together North East business support providers – so there is a collective voice to inform strategy and policy, share best practice, and raise challenges and opportunities across the region. The Provider Network is led collaboratively by the Provider Network Steering Group, which is made up of representatives from across the region and the business support eco-system.</p> <p>To support the development of transition into a new funding landscape the North East Business Support Provider Network presented a joint letter to Rt Honourable for Levelling Up Housing and Communities making recommendations on the development of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This included a series of case studies to demonstrate the region's extensive experience and expertise in delivering European funded projects to help inform and shape future funding.</p>
<p>Continue to lead the North East Growth Hub Cluster and work closely with government to support the development of the national Growth Hub network.</p>	<p>The North East LEP led one of 10 national Growth Hub Clusters. We have delivered cluster initiatives with Tees Valley Combined Authority including project development on Made Smarter and Peer Networks, business-facing workshops on EU Exit and Net Zero, training for our advisers, and we commissioned the development of an online segmentation and diagnostic tool.</p> <p>Through weekly national meetings, we have provided a sounding board to government on the development of policy and strategy and worked on national projects to align services delivered by Growth Hubs, the Department for International Trade and Innovate UK.</p>
<p>Deliver 26 government funded Peer Networks to support approximately 280 businesses to improve their productivity performance.</p>	<p>We reduced the number of Peer Network cohorts we were required to deliver by five at the end of quarter three due to changes in the Made Smarter programme and external suppliers failing to recruit within the timeframe. The 21/22 programme supported 165 businesses across 21 cohorts.</p> <p>These interactions achieved a customer satisfaction rate of 95%.</p>
<p>Expand the North East Growth Hub's Growth through Mentoring programme with the aim of supporting 100 businesses to unlock their growth potential.</p>	<p>Mentoring support has primarily been delivered through Peer Network and High Potential Startups activity this year. Mentoring has been prominent in all our delivery programmes, but specifically the Growth through Mentoring programme has re-engaged with mentors, attracting new mentors from across the region.</p> <p>Recognising the role mentoring plays in leadership development, we have expanded the Growth through Mentoring offer and developed a cross-company mentoring programme to support large businesses to access external mentoring. Working with Newcastle Building Society, Northumbrian Water and Learning Curve, the first matches have been made.</p>

Work with sector teams to ensure the business support ecosystem meets sector specific firm level needs.	Work has been undertaken across each sector to understand the specific challenges, barriers and opportunities that businesses are facing at different stages of development. The intelligence gathered is being presented to our private sector-led strategy boards during Q1 2022/23 and will be used to strengthen the sector development strategy to ensure that the region can capitalise on market drivers.
Deliver 11 Local Growth Fund Cluster Development Fund projects.	<p>The North East LEP invested £240k Local Growth Funding into 12 projects that applied for the Cluster Development Fund. All projects were designed to support the economic recovery and collectively supported 313 businesses. Projects included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advanced Manufacturing Forum – Making Owt 2. Collingwood Solutions – Semiconductor Cluster 3. Durham Culture Partnership 4. Dynamo – Office for Rapid Cyber Security Advancement 5. Entrepreneurs' Forum – Digital Delivery 6. Food and Drink North East - COVID-19 Business Support 7. North East Automotive Alliance – EV North 8. NEPIC – Pharmaceutical Innovation Accelerator 9. NGI – International Capacity of the Visitor Economy 10. Sunderland Software City – Creating Capacity in the Digital Sector 11. Northern Film and Media – Comedy Hot House 12. Reatech Ltd – Resilient Communications
Improve the region's economic resilience.	
Develop Peer Networks in the sectors most affected by COVID-19 (hospitality, retail, tourism) to support businesses to recover.	<p>To help businesses hit hardest by the pandemic we specifically designed Peer Networks so businesses could work with one another to discuss their challenges and share solutions; accelerating businesses response and adding to resilience. Cohorts for businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector (two cohorts), on the high street (one cohort) and in the creative and cultural sectors (one cohort) were formed. These cohorts offered peer support to over 40 businesses.</p> <p>Participants on the high street cohort have fed back that the programme helped them to refocus their service offering, expand their online presence, better communicate their offering, and increase their team.</p>

Continue to gather and develop weekly intelligence reports to identify issues early, and inform government and regional stakeholders on the state of business.

We have continued to work alongside our Provider Network, Local Authorities and business representative organisations to draft and submit a weekly intelligence report that includes stakeholder feedback, and local data and research outputs.

We amplified our existing intelligence gathering systems to ensure detailed and accurate reporting could be provided, including through our Customer Relationship Management system to enable advisers to capture issues and trends for every engagement with a business.

During 2021/22 our intelligence gathering activities detected and reported to government early inflationary pressures that businesses were facing and have seen grow throughout the year.

Run bespoke workshops and support services to educate businesses on specific issues and changes related to EU transition.

We delivered six workshops to support businesses to navigate and understand the new trading environment and Net Zero agenda.

EU Transition workshops focused on three key themes to support businesses to navigate and understand the new trading environment: exporting and importing services to the EU; negotiating sales with international customers; and trade agreements.

45 businesses and individuals across the cluster boundaries attended the workshops.



Business and Sector Growth: Energy

Key deliverables - What we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Accelerate delivery of energy projects within the region, helping deliver growth and net zero.

Operationalise the Energy for Growth Accelerator.	The Energy for Growth Accelerator has been operationalised. Two programme managers are in post and the first requests from local authorities were submitted in September 2021. Since September, the programme is now supporting 10 projects across the region, with a project value of £150 million. Eight of these projects are low carbon heat networks.
Convene stakeholders to agree the North East masterplan approach.	Agreement is in place with regional local authorities that a North East approach to energy masterplanning and local area energy planning should be pursued, involving other stakeholders such as the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Northern Gas Networks and Northern Powergrid. This will be taken forward in the coming year.
Tactically promote heat networks High Potential Opportunity, heat study and Mine Energy white paper.	<p>The High Potential Opportunity (HPO) on heat networks has been briefed in to the Department for International Trade (DIT) overseas teams by the North East LEP, Invest North East England, and DIT specialists. It is now being actively promoted to industry in overseas markets in order to highlight the region and generate investment leads.</p> <p>In addition, two ministerial visits to the North East have occurred to highlight the HPO and opportunities in the low carbon heat sectors, and specifically heat networks. One of these visits involved a round table with leading industry representatives at UK level to discuss sectoral and regional opportunities. Further events, market engagement and evidence base activity is being planned with the Business and Sector Growth team.</p> <p>The Mine Energy white paper has been published, and was well received by industry and government. It includes a ministerial foreword and clear set of recommendations to further develop the sector and project delivery at UK scale. The Energy for Growth team continues to lead the national Mine Energy Taskforce to promote the work and take forward the recommendations. The taskforce has grown significantly over the last year and now has over 100 members from local and central government, industry and academia.</p> <p>All this work has been further informed by the heat network supply chain opportunity study commissioned by the North East LEP. This led the team to identify an overarching opportunity for the North East to build the UK's first low carbon heat cluster, with key economic opportunities around heat pump manufacture and heat network supply chains. The team has developed key messaging and strategy to deliver on this ambition.</p>
Coordinate regional local authorities in delivery of local authority delivery 2 programme.	We have supported regional local authorities, through our role in the North East and Yorkshire Hub Net Zero Hub, to secure Local Authority Delivery Retrofit funding. Through this programme, around £20 million energy efficiency retrofit funding has been awarded to North East local authorities, which will fund energy efficiency measures across 2,000 homes.
Support capacity building in local authorities for retrofit delivery.	We have facilitated Retrofit Coordinator Training for regional local authority staff, to develop the skills required for successful delivery of large scale retrofit schemes. We have also informed retrofit capacity building initiatives led by the North of Tyne Combined Authority, including exercises to develop a better evidence base around housing stock condition, investment opportunities and impacts, and procurement route options for large scale retrofit delivery.

Complete Rural Community Energy Fund delivery and evaluation.	Through the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF), £600,000 of funding was successfully awarded to develop community energy projects in the North East. The entire RCEF programme is now complete and has delivered its anticipated aims. The evaluation is being led by Tees Valley Combined Authority.
Complete feasibility for retrofit skills proposition and determine roles in delivery.	We commissioned delivery of a Domestic Retrofit Skills Assessment, supported by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub and the North East Energy Catalyst. The report has been published and includes an action plan outlining a series of recommendations for colleges, independent learning providers, and industry to enact. Implementation of the action plan will help to address the skills gaps in hitting net zero targets in domestic energy efficiency. Evidence presented in the action plan and final report will also be used to inform funding applications.
Coordinate our energy innovation and demonstration assets to develop and showcase solutions to global challenges.	
Finalise pipeline for North East Future Energy System Today prospectus.	A £280 million regional energy innovation and demonstration pipeline has been identified by the North East Energy Catalyst. This pipeline will now form the basis for more proactive and ambitious collaborative funding bids from the region. A Pipeline Working Group is set up to help identify funding opportunities for combined projects and programmes to deliver the pipeline.
Establish the Energy Catalyst SME support model.	North East Energy Catalyst delivered the Energy Innovation Challenge Programme during 2021/22, awarding 10 SMEs a £20,000 Local Growth Fund grant to support them to grow and bring products or services to market. The programme also supported a wider cohort of businesses, including those funded, by brokering connections to the Catalyst board partners and delivering business support workshops and one-to-one sessions on various topics facilitated by the North East LEP Business and Sector Growth team and the Innovation SuperNetwork. A revised Innovation Challenge Programme is in development for financial year 2022/23 to enable regional SMEs to gain access to investment.
Launch the Energy Catalyst SME network and partner network.	The Energy Catalyst SME and Partner network has been established. Industry partners have joined the partner network, which have begun yielding new connections and projects, including Clean Tyne Maritime UK.
Plan and schedule the North East Energy Catalyst Summit.	The North East Energy Catalyst Summit took place on 8 March 2022 as a hybrid event, attended by 95 delegates. There were also site visits to partner facilities on 10 and 11 March 2022.
Forward comms plan for the North East Energy Catalyst, increasing awareness and influence nationally and internationally.	Communications is fully integrated with the North East Energy Catalyst delivery framework. Activity has included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A campaign during the 12 days of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) showcasing regional energy innovation and demonstration assets; • A video promoting our regional assets
Support growth, investment and cluster development in key energy sectors.	
Devise targeted inward investment process, and initial targets.	We have worked closely with Invest North East England on building the inward investment process around three key energy sectors of opportunity: offshore wind, electric vehicle and battery, and low carbon heat sectors. North of Tyne Combined Authority, other partner authorities and industry bodies such as NOF energy and the North East Automotive Alliance have also contributed to this activity. <p>Market intelligence, including target sub-sectors and potential target organisations, has been gathered through commissioned reports and close working with national government and industry representatives. Key successes and realised inward investments have included Britishvolt, JDR Cable Systems and Equinor.</p>

<p>Agree, together with Energi Coast, ownership and workplan for wider offshore wind cluster development priorities.</p>	<p>Energi Coast has created a vision for the development of the cluster and introduced sub-groups that focus on topics. The provision for these subgroups was included in the revised Energi Coast constitution which we, along with other partners, informed.</p> <p>The North East LEP has defined roles in the cluster, including sitting on the management group, leading the skills subgroup, and being a member of the innovation subgroup. We have contributed to the workplan by integrating the export strategy into the work of Energi Coast and led on infrastructure-related initiatives including coordinating regional responses to government calls for infrastructure projects related to offshore wind.</p>
<p>Agree with stakeholders and coordinate the LEP's role in supporting the electric vehicles and battery sectors.</p>	<p>In November 2021, the LEP convened key regional stakeholders including Nissan, Britishvolt, Envision, Newcastle University and the North East Automotive Alliance, together with North of Tyne Combined Authority, Sunderland City Council and Invest North East England. This was to discuss how to best represent the region's strengths in the electric vehicle and battery sectors, and what support is needed from the public sector.</p> <p>We have awarded more than £90,000 through our Project Development Accelerator Fund to expand the work of a new partnership aimed at growing the North East's battery sector.</p>
<p>Convene stakeholders to agree and promote a low carbon heat cluster approach.</p>	<p>The North East LEP has worked with partners to define the opportunity for the region to build the UK's first low carbon heat cluster, building on the heat network High Potential Opportunity (HPO), a c£500 million pipeline of heat network projects, leading innovation and delivery assets across low carbon heat pathways such as hydrogen, heat pumps and geothermal, and the LEP is the mine energy task force.</p> <p>We convened a round table in the region during 2021 to discuss the region's opportunity in the UK context, which had ministerial attendance alongside key industry organisations such as Logstor, Vital, Engie (Equans), Pinnacle and Star Refrigeration. Following this round table and other work in the sector, we continue to develop an action plan and key messaging to progress this ambition.</p>
<p>Agree regional recommendations on UK content and channels to feed these into.</p>	<p>A series of views and recommendations on UK content issues in the offshore wind sector were gathered and consolidated by the North of Tyne Combined Authority. We contributed to this session and the results have been shared.</p>
<p>Support mobilisation of the Global Underwater Hub in the North East and effective connections into networks.</p>	<p>We participated in the Global Underwater Hub's implementation group, updating regional networks such as Energi Coast on progress, and enabled Subsea UK to update regional stakeholders via the North East LEP's offshore energy and underwater markets steering group. Subsea UK also presented on the Global Underwater Hub to the Offshore Wind North East conference in December 2021.</p>



Business and Sector Growth: Tech

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Work with partners on the North East Digital Ambition, by developing and publishing goals, strategic priorities and a plan that supports them.

Finalise and publish the North East Digital Ambition.

Agree strategic priorities.

Map how stakeholders can contribute to the achievement of the North East Digital Ambition.

Carry out a research study exploring rates of digital sector business startup and scaleup and what is either enabling or inhibiting growth.

Use the intelligence generated from these actions to inform the development of a digital sector action plan.

Review and implement new governance structure.

Working with the Digital Steering Group a decision was made to refocus the programme on the growth of the tech sector rather than the wider digital agenda. The intention during 2021/22 was to form a new private sector Tech Strategy Board integrated into the Business Growth Board. The decision was taken to delay the formation of this board until the conclusion of the LEP Review, which was expected before 2021 Summer Recess but then faced ongoing delays until the publication of the Levelling Up white paper in January 2022. This has caused delays in moving the programme forward. Now that we have more certainty over the future of LEPs we are in the process of forming the Tech Strategy Board.

An intelligence survey, one to one diagnostic interventions via the Growth Hub, and sector focused Peer Network and High Potential Startup Cohorts are combining to provide intelligence on what is enabling and/or inhibiting growth in the sector. The LEP also provided funding to Sunderland Software City via the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Cluster Development Fund to carry out a research study into the challenges faced by tech startups. The intelligence gathered has fed into an evidence base report that is informing and being considered by the Tech Sector Strategy Board.

The interim Tech Sector Programme Manager has been working with the LEP's Policy and Strategy team to establish an evidence base, draft vision and strategic themes for consideration of the Tech Strategy Board, once established.

Delayed due to outcome of the LEP Review. Expected to be in place by the end of quarter one 2022/23.



Business and Sector Growth: Health and life sciences

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Modernise and grow pharmaceutical manufacturing in the region.

Finalise business case for funding pharma manufacturing and innovation facility and identify funding sources.

North East Pharma has been supported through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Project Development Accelerator Fund to develop a business case to support the development of a generic drug manufacturing facility designed to address supply shortages in the NHS and to build more resilient supply chains which have been exposed through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The flagship Life Science Manufacturing and Innovation Zone (LSMIZ) proof of concept study was awarded funding via the LGF Project Acceleration Fund. The LSMIZ is designed as a mechanism to significantly boost the growth of the health and life sciences (H&LS) sector, to put the North East on the global map and bring forward a pipeline of game changing projects.

Develop supply chain development programme to move forward recommendation of gaps analysis and support diversification. Generics manufacture – also look at wider supply chain and supply and demand dynamics.

The North East LEP is supporting North East Pharma to develop a business case for a pharma generics manufacturing and innovation facility and funded the North East of England Process Industry Cluster (NEPIC) via the LGF to carry out a generics manufacturing supply chain study to support the North East Pharma business case development.

In addition the H&LS Working Group is developing a register of local and regional H&LS companies.

Develop a sector skills framework to support development of an appropriately skilled workforce to enable growth.

A health and life sciences skills group has been established between education, employers in the sector and other key stakeholders. This group has developed a sector skills framework to align skills supply and demand across the region and activity to deliver this has commenced.

Activity across the skills group partnership delivered against the objectives outlined in the skills framework, relevant to pharmaceutical manufacturing includes: a report outlining the skills demand and challenges experienced by employers in the industry, published by North East LEP on the North East Evidence Hub to inform providers; a report developed by NEPIC, commissioned by the North East LEP, to map the existing regional CPD offer with a focus on digital and technical skills and general skills for business; information and awareness sessions around apprenticeships; and a health and life sciences sector online careers toolkit launched to support schools and colleges to promote careers in the sector.

Support industrial digitalisation through Made Smarter Hub.

12 of the 64 businesses that were supported intensely through the Made Smarter programme were from the pharmaceutical and chemical sector. They have received diagnostics on their digital readiness, from which they have developed adoption roadmaps, attended structured peer networks sessions to dig deeper into these, and worked with a panel of industrial digital technology specialists on implementation projects.

Develop an inward investment proposition around our advanced manufacturing strengths.	Working with Invest North East England (INEE), who have appointed a dedicated role to focus on the promotion of the H&LS sector, the region's inward investment proposition has been updated. In addition INEE have been working closely with the DIT to develop the Aging High Potential Opportunities programme which has the backing of ministers and is being actively promoted internationally. In addition the development of the North East Health and Life Science Manufacturing and Innovation Zone is designed as a mechanism to grow and communicate the region's value proposition.
Refresh First for Pharma study to understand trajectory of businesses in the sector and to understand needs, barriers, and opportunities for growth.	A refresh is being carried out through the North East Growth Hub which has launched a business survey and is actively engaging with businesses from across the H&LS sector undertake a diagnosis process to understand their challenges and barriers and to develop a plan for growth. The intelligence gathered is being used to inform policy and strategy development and will be embedded as an ongoing process.
Increase the number of innovative health and life sciences business that are born, grow and scale in the region.	
Support the formation of university spinouts.	Northern Accelerator has supported nine investments from its Seed Investment Fund (£1.8 million) Life science spinouts during 2021/22 including 34 executives places in spinouts and £3.5 million awarded to pre-incorporation projects.
Support the formation of corporate and NHS spinouts.	The Academic Health and Science Network via its Omnia Pathway is helping H&LS companies to enter the NHS supply chain.
Support existing businesses to diversify into the health and life sciences sector.	Supply Chain North East (via NEPIC) continues to support businesses to diversify into H&LS and funding has been secured to continue this activity to December 2023. We have worked with 14 H&LS businesses which are considering diversification
Develop a skills framework to support the development of an appropriately skilled workforce to enable growth.	A health and life sciences skills group has been established as a partnership between education, employers in the sector and other key stakeholders. This group has developed a sector skills framework to align skills supply and demand across the region and activity to deliver this has commenced. Activity across the skills group partnership delivered against the objectives outlined in the skills framework, relevant to innovative health and life sciences businesses includes: a partnership with Bionow skills special interest group to build upon skills intel collated from pharmaceutical manufacturers; North East Ambition skills support for SMEs delivered through partnership with the Education Development Trust; information and awareness sessions around apprenticeships; and a health and life sciences sector online careers toolkit launched to support schools and colleges to promote careers in the sector.
Promote the region via Ageing HPO and expand HPO approach via IDPs to promote regional strengths including diagnostics, rare disease and advanced delivery systems.	Working with the DIT and their overseas posts, Invest North East England has incorporated the Ageing HPO into the promotion of the North East life science sector. This has included the creation of a role to promote the sector and an updated regional proposition. The Life Science Manufacturing and Innovation Zone will seek to learn from the HPO approach and apply good practice to its development.

Broker access to a range of expert support and services across the health and care sectors through the Innovation Pathways.	
Develop Innovation Pathway brokerage system including the mapping and gapping of supply and informing innovation funding pipeline.	The Academic Health Science Networks (AHSN) have progressed development of their Omnia brokerage platform and appointed Innovation Navigators to enhance the development of the Innovation Pathway which brings together those seeking support to break into the NHS with the support and funding required to do so. A funding plan is in place to achieve closer integration with the North East Growth Hub.
Develop our ecosystem.	
Progress priority LGF pipeline projects that demonstrate greatest contribution towards programme goals.	15 innovation pipeline projects have been identified in the H&LS sector. These include Biosphere Phase 2 which will provide access to the specialist facilities and grow-on space that's demanded by businesses in the sector and Northern Accelerator which will continue to support the formation of university spinouts.
Carry out study to assess if property and infrastructure can meet the needs of industry.	The Life Science Manufacturing and Innovation Zone proof of concept study will map all health and life sciences facilities in the region and consider the developments that are required to provide businesses in the region with the property required to facilitate their growth and development. The study has been commissioned and will be completed by October 2022.
Carry out freight logistics study.	We have worked with Newcastle International Airport to commission research and propose options for enhancing international connectivity linked to the growth in pharmaceutical and life sciences exports over the last two years and the future growth potential in the region identified in the strategy. The research project, which involved interviews with a significant number of business and infrastructure partners, was completed during the year and made detailed recommendations. A second project has now been commissioned to take forward the recommendations.
Develop base line data for sector and publish on the North East Evidence Hub.	This has been revised within the H&LS working group that is made up of DIT, BioNow, NEPIC, AHSN, Dynamo, NGI, Invest North East England, Innovate UKRI, Northern Accelerator, the North East Growth Hub and the North East LEP's Policy and Strategy, Innovation, and Skills teams.



Business and Sector Growth: Advanced Manufacturing

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Develop the competitiveness of the North East's Advanced Manufacturing sector.

Work with government and Tees Valley Combined Authority to lead the development of a North East Made Smarter adoption programme which will support 100 manufacturers to adopt industrial digitisation technologies.

We assisted 76 business across the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and Tees Valley Combined Authority areas to adopt industrial digitalisation technologies. This was reduced from the initial target of 100 to reflect the refinement of the project delivery plan which was completed in Q1/2021-22, and delays in final contracting with government. 60 of the businesses received high-intensity support, attending a programme of digital leadership and management workshops, and all were invited to apply for grant funding. 31 businesses applied for revenue grant funding to work with technology specialists, of which 28 were approved with a total grant value of £93K. We also received applications from 28 businesses for capital projects and have recommended 23 of these for awards – total SME project value is £419K, with grant funding of £180K to support these.

Following the mobilisation of Made Smarter we will establish an Advanced Manufacturing steering group.

The mobilisation and delivery of the Made Smarter programme was prioritised this year and, as a consequence, the strategy development work was delayed until quarter four. We have conducted initial sector research, and established the project plan to take the strategy development forward, and will formally establish the Advanced Manufacturing Steering group in quarter 1 2022/2023.

The steering group will then work with the LEP to develop an Advanced Manufacturing Sector plan/strategy.

Skills, employment, inclusion and progression

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Deliver North East Ambition.

Support and demonstrate progress and impact as we work with 145 schools and colleges to achieve the eight Good Career Guidance benchmarks.

We have supported over 160 schools and colleges and improved benchmark performance during the year across seven of the eight Good Career Guidance Benchmarks:

Benchmark 1: +15.2%

Benchmark 2: +3.0%

Benchmark 3: +7.1%

Benchmark 4: +15.2%

Benchmark 5: +2.0%

Benchmark 6: +7.1%

Benchmark 7: +3.0%

Benchmark 8: +0.0%

These figures are based on matched schools/colleges (April 2021 - January 2022 (latest figures available)).

Use the experiences and results of an independent evaluation of the two-year Career Benchmarks: Primary Pilot to expand the number of schools using the adapted set of benchmarks as a framework for delivering effective careers-related learning in primary settings to over 100.

The independent evaluation was completed and can be read [here](#). The evaluation showed that the pilot average for fully achieved characteristics at the end of year two was 65%, up from 40% in the year one audit, and 13% at the baseline audit. And the average number of fully achieved benchmarks was 2.3 at the end of year two, up from 0.6 at the end of year one, and 0.0 at the baseline audit.

The pilot has been expanded from 68 primary schools to 103 schools.

Continue to facilitate the partnerships between businesses and educators to reduce the gap between skills supply and skills demand, through the Enterprise Adviser Network, by engaging with 40 new employers.

The Enterprise Adviser Network has signed up 36 new employers, with 75 expressions of interest in the pipeline, following a proactive recruitment campaign. The total number of Enterprise Advisers is now 148, 60% of which are SMEs. We have seen an increase in digital and advanced manufacturing businesses, aligning with our growth sectors, and an increase in female advisers to help narrow the gender gap.

We've seen an uplift in activity between the Enterprise Adviser Network and further education (FE), with the introduction of the FE Enterprise Adviser Network, where the expertise and experiences of Enterprise Advisers working with colleges is shared across the full college network. The introduction of the Business Education Engagement Partnerships (BEEP) pilot has also been introduced to cultivate relationships between employers and schools and embed technical education pathways into school career strategies in Gateshead. Of 15 schools and colleges in the Gateshead area, 13 were involved in the pilot, nine matched with an Enterprise Adviser, two schools are looking to be matched shortly, and two SEND schools are to engage and then look at matching.

Continue to act as an advocate of the eight Good Career Guidance benchmarks and offer strategic leadership regionally and nationally by delivering 15 regional events to educators and businesses.

We have held 41 regional events and hosted the National Careers Week 2022 launch event:

- Three Regional Careers Leader Network Meetings (attended by on average 80 career leaders)
- Three College Hub meetings
- Three SEND Hub meetings
- Three Full Network Primary Pilot meetings including an end of pilot celebratory event
- Three Enterprise Adviser meetings
- Six Industry Insight sessions
- Six Apprenticeship Group meetings
- 12 route network meetings supporting the early adopters of T Levels and connecting them with employers to support the co-design and delivery of T Levels
- One Business Benefits for T Levels for the Construction Industry event
- One launch of the Gateshead Building Education & Enterprise Partnership Project, followed by the first meeting.

Participate in key working groups and steering groups.

We represent the North East LEP and the LEP network in 16 regional and national working groups that influence policy, strategy and delivery including:

- DfE Strategic Development Network representing the national LEP network on employer support for T Levels
- Gatsby Charitable Foundation's 'Visualising Progression Pathways' working group
- North East Ambition Advisory Group
- DfE Opportunity North East Board
- Ford Next Generation Learning Leadership Council
- Edge Future Learning International Partners Group
- Careers & Enterprise Company's FE & Skills Group
- Careers & Enterprise Company's SEND CoP
- Seven individual LA CEIAG groups
- CEIAG Network Chair's Group
- Professional Practice Group
- North East LEP Apprenticeship Provider Group
- North East LEP T Level Stakeholder Group
- North East LEP T Level Training Provider Group
- North East Institution of Technology Operational Board
- North East LEP Cornerstone Employer Group.

Work with 156 businesses and employers to enable them to make effective investments in their workforce. Support them to navigate the skills ecosystem to access apprenticeships, traineeships, Kickstart, technical education pathways, in-work training, provision of placement and work experience opportunities.

We have supported 170 SMEs to navigate the skills ecosystem to access apprenticeships, traineeships, Kickstart, technical education pathways, in-work training, provision of placement and work experience opportunities.

Deliver Education Challenge.

Continue the support offered to One Vision schools, aiming to improve the destination outcomes of a selected cohort through targeted and personalised careers advice and interventions.

The One Vision programme has met all delivery milestones throughout 2021/22. 480 students across 16 schools have accessed up to five hours of advice and guidance with two more sessions to take place before August 2022. A wide range of targeted careers-related activities and interventions have been offered both virtually and face-to-face. There has been an average 89% increase in the assessment levels of students across 12 themes of knowledge and understanding of options, progression pathways and careers.

The proportion of students who are unsure about their post-16 plans has decreased from 25% to 6% at the last data collection (January 2022).

Further develop processes and partnerships with a focus on the strategic use of data to improve progression and career pathways for young people.

Data from ONE Vision is used by the project to develop bespoke intervention with employers.

The data collected enables us to understand pupils' levels of career knowledge, the sectors they want to work in, the type of jobs they want in the sectors, and their post 16 pathway options. This has allowed us to inform discussions with business leaders, which has resulted in young people having the right conversation with the right businesses and consequently, improved engagement and received positive feedback from businesses and multiple interventions.

We have provided regional cuts of data to partners who have used the evidence to shape their own delivery programmes and become more targeted in their approaches to careers activity.

At a strategic level, data is analysed and is used to report progress to the Opportunity North East board and the Department for Education to ensure the project delivers against milestones. The data has also been applied to other projects such as the Effective Transition Fund.

Develop a strategy for the North East LEP to capitalise on our position as the only LEP to be a School Governor Champion. The strategy will encourage other LEPs to recruit business people, particularly from SMEs, to be school governors.

Through the five step School Governor Champion charter we actively support employees to volunteer as governors which has led to 18% of the North East LEP workforce volunteering in the region's schools or colleges.

As part of our business engagement strategy, we now actively promote school and college governance as a means of employers supporting education in the region. This is achieved in our outward facing marketing collateral and in face-to-face business engagement opportunities.

Support national organisations, including Inspiring Governance, to achieve their KPIs specific to the region including diversity of governing bodies.

We have supported national organisations to achieve their KPIs in the region through amplifying their recruitment campaigns. For example, with over 60% of volunteers over the age of 55 there is a need for increasing the recruitment of younger governors. We have worked with Inspiring Governance to produce local case studies promoting young governance and the support that is offered to young volunteers.

Support the expansion of the Ford Next Generation Learning pilot, to work with Further Education colleges to embed employer-led learning partnerships to provide high quality learning opportunities.

The partnership with Ford Next Generation Learning and further education colleges continued throughout 2021. The first college cohort of learners completed a full academic year in which they benefited from curriculum delivery, engagement with employers that had been shaped through the partnership, with results showing improved achievement, retention and progression of learners. The partnership work expanded to other faculty areas and a further college, with new employer groups being formed to co-develop and shape curriculum delivery in health and care pathways from September 2022.

<p>Develop a partnership approach to continued professional development for both schools and businesses that encourages and highlights the benefits of closer engagement between business and education. The offer will include curriculum engagement, support to develop meaningful work experience, and support for Initial Teacher Trainees to develop understanding of careers learning in subject areas.</p>	<p>We have delivered a range of continuing professional development (CPD) sessions across the network including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gatsby Benchmark four subject-specific training for vocational subject teachers • Curriculum-project planning and development training • Support to businesses who have been partnered to co-develop curriculum projects • Support sessions to organise teacher externships • Development of work experience programmes. <p>In addition, we have supported partners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching schools to offer peer support • Signposting external teacher CPD, for example, Project Based Learning Goes to University (Newcastle University programme) <p>The impact is improved understanding of effective employer-education engagement.</p>
<p>Improve skills progression.</p>	
<p>Promote the concept of fusion skills regionally.</p>	<p>Research to understand the concept of fusion has been completed. This has led to strategic discussions with NCFE which has a shared interest in 'essential skills for the fourth industrial revolution'. Proposals for the promotion of essential skills across the education system, from primary through to higher education, are being co-developed with implementation planned for next year.</p>
<p>Deliver a pilot that demonstrates how fusion skills (STEM and arts and design skills) are critical for success in an A.I. workplace.</p>	<p>We have completed a scoping exercise and established a project remit for a pilot. We are exploring options with a potential funder, who will also act as a strategic partner.</p>
<p>Support eight early adopters to deliver good quality T levels and specialist technical education.</p>	<p>We have supported eight early adopters to deliver T Levels, by providing the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a range of awareness events to employers through a bespoke Business Benefits of T Levels to Construction Industry event, which engaged 17 businesses, resulting in five new employers connecting with providers to support placements; through to sessions aimed at business brokerage organisations such as the regional CBI Employer Skills Forum and Education Development Trust's SME Facilitators • Commissioned and delivered training for provider staff for effective employer engagement aimed at achieving consistent messaging on T Levels across the business community • Established four sector 'routes ready' T Level networks, meeting termly to facilitate collaboration between early adopters of T Level and non-T Level colleges to support with good practice sharing and identifying challenges • Engaged with awarding bodies and connected sector representatives, such as the Department for Education-contracted Education Training Foundation to the provider base, to promote external funding and support available showcase national good practice regionally and vice versa.

Work with partners to analyse data relating to further education (FE) to higher education (HE) transitions, graduate retention trends, post-graduate employment opportunities and degree apprenticeship provision. Use this intelligence to prepare a plan to promote the North East as a location for graduates and skilled workers to stay and thrive.

We have analysed Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 19/20 localities data to understand apprenticeship delivery across FE and HE and expanded support around labour market information to higher education. Newcastle University is now represented on the labour market information (LMI) working group.

We have worked with Newcastle Business School on a strategy to retain business school graduates in the region and supported SME engagement with HE. SMEs from our North East Ambition network now offer live problems to students at The Business Clinic at Northumbria University.

Develop an approach to support the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance community to embed broader technical education in their practice to support progression pathways.

We have published technical education information, advice and guidance on the North East Ambition website, which can be found [here](#). The content was developed with career leads to ensure it was relevant and met their needs.

We are also developing a series of CPD training targeted at careers leads in partnership with the Education Training Foundation.

Increase youth employment.

Build on the success of Generation North East and Durham Works to develop future models to prevent youth unemployment, by developing programmes of career guidance, education and skills support for young people aged 16 to 24.

The learnings from Generation North East and Durham Works contributed significantly to evidence presented by the North East LEP to the Youth Unemployment Committee, which was also featured in the final report.

We have worked with CBI to develop a young person's charter, to ensure young people are involved in developing future models.

From a delivery perspective, the programme has worked closely with colleagues at Durham County Council to build on the success of its model to prevent youth unemployment. Durham Works has supported 8,761 unemployed 16–24-year-olds since 2016. The programme was awarded an extension until 2023. 8,027 (92%) have completed the programme and of those 6,241 (78%) have progressed into employment, education or training or gained a qualification. The programme has expanded to include a specialised arm for young people with barriers to progression into employment including SEND, care leavers and young offenders. Additionally, Durham Enable is a new specialised programme supporting people with disabilities into work; currently the programme is supporting 69 people into sustained employment and has successfully placed 21 into placements.

In March 2022, our One Vision programme delivered a Pathways to a Good Career event in Durham. 300 Year 11 students attended who are due to complete their GCSEs in summer 2022 and will be transitioning to post-16 education, employment or training.

We have delivered Kickstarter activity and worked closely with partners in Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to rollout Restart and Job Entry Targeted Support.

Analyse data to establish if there are barriers to entry to apprenticeships and develop a strategy to address any gap in provision in response to this research to share with partners and providers.

We have analysed data from the 21/22 ESFA data cube to create a regional picture of apprenticeship uptake and delivery. We conducted a survey via the Apprenticeship Provider group's members and trusted employer partners on their engagement/appetite for engaging with apprenticeships for 16 to 18 year olds which will inform next year's apprenticeship activities.

Ensure connected communities.

Commission a research project to understand the impact of digital exclusion in our communities and understand the changing nature of jobs due to automation and digitalisation.

The research we commissioned is published on the North East Evidence Hub [here](#).

The report was presented the Skills Advisory Panel, the North East LEP Board, North East Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee, North East Combined Authority Leadership Board and North of Tyne Combined Authority Inclusive Economy Board. It will provide further evidence for the local skills report and other commissioned work on our Evidence Hub. The evidence provides a basis for the needs assessment of digital bootcamps and other strategic training and reskilling programmes.

Work with government, local and combined authorities, the voluntary sector, and businesses to secure funding and resources to ensure that all North East residents can develop their digital skills regardless of their age, location, or economic status.

The North East LEP has been awarded £80,000 funding by the Project Development Accelerator fund to produce a business case for a regional digital inclusion programme. This business case will be used by the North East LEP and partners to bid for future funding opportunities, including the Shared Prosperity Fund.



Innovation

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Stimulate new business opportunities through the North East Open Innovation Challenge.

Bid for, and aim to deliver, three innovation challenges with proposed themes of decarbonising the circular economy, crime reduction in rural areas and health innovation.

We secured £712,000 from the North of Tyne Combined Authority's Investment Fund for a new open innovation challenge project, Challenge North Tyne, that will take forward the lessons learned from the COVID-19 Open Innovation Challenge. Challenge North Tyne will define challenges in carbon reduction, healthy ageing and 5G/digital enablement. Challenges will be launched by mid 2022 following the challenge definition phase. Project delivery is scheduled to be completed by mid 2023.

Develop the Challenge North East website so that it can evolve into a site that not only educates and informs about the benefits of the challenge process but becomes a platform to host and facilitate challenges in different sectors.

A Challenge North East interactive website is in place and will host Challenge North Tyne and other future challenges in the region. An aspiration is to enhance use of the platform to enable company or industry listing of challenges that require innovative responses that could be solved by the region's wider business community. The website will be launched at the start of the challenge definition phase in mid 2022.

Position innovation challenges as a route to new business opportunities and growth.

Our COVID-19 challenge programme has continued to address the need of regional organisations and businesses to solve problems caused by the disruption effected by the pandemic. The open innovation programme provided a focus to identify, select and respond rapidly to accelerate innovative solutions to two identified challenges: in-person events and home-based services.

The COVID-19 challenge programme demonstrated that local SMEs are keen to engage in challenge activity, with 63 expressions of interest across two challenge areas. We will build the approaches developed into the Challenge North Tyne programme and embed learning into the Challenge North East website.

As a supporting and awareness-raising mechanism, we built open innovation content for the North East Growth Hub that clearly articulates the benefits of innovation as a route to new business opportunities and growth.

Prioritise a regional pipeline of projects to form a strategic investment programme.

Work with at least 10 regional partners, identified and assessed via an expression of interest process, to champion and develop investment-ready business cases for innovation projects and support them to secure funding and private sector investment.

An open call was published for expressions of interest for investment-ready innovation business cases. 51 were received, evaluated and reviewed by an external panel to form a draft pipeline of projects.

Nine have been identified as priority projects and will be closely supported by the North East LEP executive team, advisory and steering groups.

11 were selected as development projects to be supported to develop investible business cases.

We will monitor the remaining prospective projects, identifying opportunities to progress as they become available.

In preparation for UK Shared Prosperity Fund, 20 proposals came forward for revenue activities including innovation business support. These proposals form a basis for the development of regional propositions that boost competitiveness and productivity through innovation.

Continue to support our businesses to capitalise on local research and innovation capability.

Identify opportunities for collaboration and facilitate relationships between businesses and innovation assets.

Collaboration has been central to our activity during 2021/22 - we have continuously identified opportunities for businesses and innovation assets, particularly by:

- Linking projects as part of the innovation project pipelining activity, to increase potential project impact.
- Linking projects with the Innovation Delivery Partnerships Pilot to nurture opportunities and relationships.
- Supporting VentureFest North East that was attended by 850 delegates and hosted the Innovation Showcase, and North East Innovation Award.
- Developing relationships with The Productivity Institute and with the Knowledge Transfer Network to identify opportunities to boost innovation activity and investment and facilitate relationships.

Facilitate access to research and capabilities that will help businesses increase innovation activity and facilitate knowledge transfer.

We have delivered this in three key ways:

- Ensuring the innovation project pipeline includes business support programmes within the region, which will provide capacity and offer knowledge transfer and finance.
- Publishing and maintaining the innovation toolkit on the North East Growth Hub to facilitate access to knowledge and support. The toolkit has been supported by the region's universities and innovation assets by publishing their own offers and providing content for case studies.
- Embedding support for innovation activity and knowledge transfer in the Future Markets Acceleration programme.

Inform and help shape emerging national innovation strategy.

We held round table discussions with strategic regional innovation partners to inform Innovate UK and help shape the forthcoming strategy.

Increase private sector investment into growing innovation businesses.

Support mechanisms to increase investment in R&D and innovation through relationships and collaboration including:

- Supporting the promotion and launch of the City of London Corporation Interconnector
- Facilitating the preparation of an investment plan for Venture North
- Supporting the evolution of the Northern Accelerator programme.

We have:

- Supported the launch of the City of London Finance for Sustainable Growth Interconnector, working with partners to provide content and to inform its development as a mechanism to boost innovation activity and investment through strategic relationships
- Endorsed Venture North as a priority project on the new pipeline. We connected the Venture North team to discussions around pension funds, both regionally and with the City of London.
- Supported Northern Accelerator through its board and through its endorsement on the innovation project pipeline.

Contribute to the development of proposals for the successor to the North East Fund, ensuring the needs of the region's innovators are met.

We worked with the North East Fund Limited, North East Access to Finance and the British Business Bank teams to plan what successor funds should look like.

Engage with partners to identify emerging opportunities and drive business growth through an Innovation Delivery Partnerships (IDP) approach.

<p>Submit bid proposals to the UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF) for a project to develop further and deliver at pace the IDP approach. If successful deliver the proposals in line with funding award(s).</p>	<p>Five bids were submitted to the UK Community Renewal Funding process to develop our IDPs. Two were approved in the areas of Gateshead and Sunderland with delivery to take place between November 2021 and June 2022.</p> <p>There is a risk of fragmentation of activity through the UK CRF approach, the extent of which we will seek to clarify through independent evaluation of the project in Gateshead and Sunderland.</p>
<p>If unsuccessful, work with partners to explore the opportunities to continue to develop the IDP approach, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to support the current and future potential IDPs • Develop and test the approach which is anticipated to include an assessment tool and benchmarks framework. 	<p>Because funding was not approved for taking forward project delivery activities to the full cohort of 11 IDPs, we have continued to commit capacity to the development of four IDPs through support and coordination from the North East LEP's executive team.</p> <p>The innovation ecosystem assessment tool was co-created with the IDP lead partners and published in 2021. The IDP cohort is actively using the tool to gather opinion about the innovation ecosystem and to prepare annual delivery plans.</p>
<p>Undertake an economic markets foresight analysis project to identify emergent global market opportunities for the North East.</p>	<p>The economic markets foresight analysis project was procured, progressed and completed during 2021/22. 17 markets were identified as having significant potential for future growth in the North East. Peer review to test and validate these initial findings was carried out, led by government's cross-departmental Open Innovation Team and engaged 24 national and international experts.</p>

Coordinate regional partners to provide enhanced innovation support activity.

<p>Facilitate connections and collaboration between national and regional partners including Innovate UK, NP11 and the Innovation SuperNetwork to boost innovation activities.</p>	<p>We continue work closely and develop partnership working with these partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovate UK – we worked closely with Innovate UK to support regional bids, publicise UKRI calls, ensure strategic alignment and feed into the UK Innovation Strategy. • NP11 - The NP11 innovation group has strengthened during the year, producing an innovation plan for the North and procuring support to develop a Space North proposition. North East LEP Innovation Director Alan Welby chaired the NP11 innovation group and worked with all NP11 LEPs to develop a Northern Powerhouse portfolio of priority projects. • Innovation SuperNetwork- The Innovation SuperNetwork was our delivery partner for the COVID-19 Open Innovation Challenge and is our delivery partner in the new Challenge North Tyne project
<p>Work with government and regional partners to support the development of, and transition to, a new innovation business support and sector development landscape.</p>	<p>We worked with government to keep pace with intentions for innovation support and continued to develop our relationship with The Productivity Institute. We held two regional round tables with government officials to inform the national Innovation Strategy.</p> <p>We continued to work with local and regional partners to prepare local approaches to innovation business support and proposals are reflected in the project pipeline through nine innovation support proposals, with a total value of £36.5 million.</p>

Work with innovation business support providers to enhance content on, and improve signposting to, schemes on the North East Growth Hub.	Providers have worked with us to develop content for the innovation toolkit – they have informed the key points that should be highlighted in defining the role of innovation, identified different funding streams available for us to promote and case studies of how SMEs have benefitted from accessing innovation support.
Publish an innovation toolkit on the North East Growth Hub, generating 300 referrals to the Growth Hub Provider Network.	<p>We published the innovation toolkit on the North East Growth Hub to raise awareness and facilitate access to innovation business support, targeting innovation active businesses and potential innovators. The toolkit provides a mechanism to raise awareness of opportunities for our businesses to capitalise on local research and innovation capability. The innovation toolkit was the most visited toolkit during January and February 2022 with 190% more traffic than the second most visited toolkit (Net Zero).</p> <p>The toolkit has to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generated 86 referrals to the Growth Hub Provider Network • Had 4,000 page views from 3,000 sessions with Google ads being the top channel for driving traffic • The average time spent on the toolkit was two minutes 20 seconds.
Evaluate the Local Growth Fund programme's Innovation Pipeline Development Fund.	The delivery of the projects supported through the fund has been significantly delayed by COVID-19 and consequently formal external evaluation was delayed until project outcomes are realised for all projects.



Transport Connectivity

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Continue to progress ongoing transport project delivery.

Deliver seven of the eight Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 schemes by March 2022, with the Newcastle Grey Street scheme to be complete by July 2021.

Extensions have been agreed with the Department for Transport (DfT) for seven of the eight schemes within the Tranche 2 programme. The Durham County Council scheme is due to complete by March 2022, with the remaining schemes complete by March 2023. Grant funding agreements are in place or being drafted for six of the eight schemes.

Deliver the Active Travel campaign funded through the Active Travel Fund by March 2022.

The Go Smarter, Go Active campaign was delivered during summer 2021 and consisted of three parts:

1. A seven-week summer event programme, 'The Go Smarter, Go Active Roadshow,' aimed at encouraging people to cycle with free bookable events including Learn to Ride sessions, refresher courses and bike maintenance workshops
2. New North East walking and cycling maps to help plan for journeys by active travel
3. A series of 16 guides for days out by active travel.

The campaign was supported by communications and marketing activity. All parts of the campaign were delivered during summer 2021 and communications activity on the maps and days out guides will continue until March 2022. The campaign has been positively received by members of the public, with the Learn to Ride sessions providing to be particularly popular, with demand exceeding availability.

Receive a final funding award from the Transforming Cities bid.

Seek approval from the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) for the release of £65 million funding to sustainable transport projects which are due to start construction by March 2022.

In the July 2021 JTC meeting, a delegated decision was approved to release £16.3 million of Transforming Cities Funding (TCF) for the Sunderland Central Station and multi-storey car park scheme. A further £7.74 million of advanced funds was agreed to be released by the JTC in October 2021 to ensure scheme delivery within TCF programme timescales. The regional Intelligent Transport System scheme is currently in appraisal and is expected to be approved in March. The Sunderland A690 scheme and the South Tyneside Healthier Metros scheme are also currently in appraisal and are due to be approved in March.

We are expecting an additional three full business cases to be approved prior to the end of March 2022. This will bring the total amount of funds approved up to £65.2 million.

Release £9.8 million for the Metro Flow scheme.

£1.7 million was released to Nexus in July 2021 following sealing of a Grant Funding Agreement between Nexus and the North East Combined Authority. Following discussions between Transport North East, the DfT and Nexus, given Metro Flow's status as the only Department for Transport retained scheme within the TCF programme, it was agreed that all remaining grant funding for the scheme will be paid directly to Nexus by the DfT.

Continue to improve and deliver better connectivity through improved infrastructure.

Deliver a funding strategy by the end of December 2021 for the Transport Plan pipeline. This will be maintained and regularly updated to secure forward capital and revenue funding for the pipeline.

A capital programme management framework was agreed by the JTC in October 2021. The regional Transport Assurance Framework is currently being audited by our internal auditors and, following the recommendations of the audit, will be reviewed and refreshed as appropriate. In addition, we will begin a refresh of the Transport Plan pipeline in March 2022 and will also consider the potential application of further devolved funds following the conclusion of the TCF programme in March 2023.

Use transport to drive innovation and business growth.

Work with Transport for the North, East Coast Mainline (ECML) authorities, MPs, Chamber of Commerce, etc. to seek investment from government for interventions that will uplift the East Coast Mainline's capacity and line speed north of York.

Lobbying for improvements in the ECML continues. Partly due to lobbying by the North East, the rail industry consultation proposal for a major timetable change on ECML from May 2022 has been postponed to May 2023. The UK Government's Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands has been published. The outcome for the region is severely disappointing as the North East will no longer be fully connected to the UK's high speed rail network. However, there are commitments to delivery interventions on the ECML between York and Newcastle to lift the capacity from six trains per hour to seven or eight. The strategic outline business case (SOBC) for this work is underway, part funded by the North East JTC.

Dependent on the outcome of government's Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands and the Restoring Your Railways bid for the reopening of the Leamside Line, prepare strategic outline business cases (SOBCs) for local rail services and an umbrella SOBC. This umbrella SOBC will encompass the various projects looking to use the Leamside line to achieve an integrated solution which maximises North East benefits.

Despite the disappointing outcomes of the IRP, work is progressing to complete the umbrella SOBC. This will provide a framework within which individual projects can be taken forward. This work is due to conclude in March 2022. A SOBC is being commissioned for a Metro extension along the northern section of the Leamside Line linking South Shields, via Washington, to Sunderland. This is being jointly funded by the North East LEP and the JTC.

Continue to support Northumberland County Council to prepare the full business case for the reintroduction of passenger services onto the Northumberland Line, which is scheduled to be submitted in Autumn 2021.

The full business case was submitted to the DfT in December 2021 and gained ministerial approval. In tandem, progress is being made with both the planning applications for the new stations and the legal orders required to secure permission to allow the infrastructure works to proceed. The public inquiry covering the required Transport and Works Act has concluded and the inspector's report is awaited.

Ensure that pipeline of schemes to support economic recovery identified in the North East Transport Plan is managed as a live programme.

A capital pipeline of schemes was agreed in the Transport Plan. New funding opportunities such as the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 and ZEBRA funding will be integrated into our capital programme following potential successful regional bids to DfT. Announcements on these funds are expected in March 2022. A prospectus and pipeline of schemes which could be delivered through a City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for the region has been developed and will also be integrated into our capital programme, subject to confirmation of the North East's eligibility to bid for funds. A programme management framework has now been agreed by the JTC. The framework details how the Transport Plan programme will be managed and updated including reporting to the JTC on progress towards delivery.

Continue to develop regional transport strategies and policies that align with the North East Transport Plan.

Produce a North East Rail and Metro Strategy to complement the North East Transport Plan.	A consultation draft was approved by the JTC on 2 February 2022. Public consultation is taking place between 14 February and 11 April 2022. Once any revisions are made we will seek JTC sign-off of the strategy in the summer of 2022.
Develop and publish a Zero Emission Policy during 2021/22 that sets out our regional commitment to the future of zero emission vehicles.	A Zero Emission Vehicle Policy for the region has been drafted and is awaiting sign-off for publication.
Deliver a strategy by March 2022 that sets out how we will communicate with individuals, businesses and communities across our region to encourage people to make more sustainable transport choices.	A strategy is being developed to encourage people to think through their travel options for the journey they wish to make, encouraging them to make the most suitable option whenever possible. The strategy will be published in 2022/23.
In collaboration with bus operators, produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan, to take advantage of funding available through government's National Bus Strategy.	Working with bus operators, we have produced the region's first Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which was submitted to government in October 2021. The next step is to agree a draft Enhanced Partnership scheme by 30 April 2022 and enact this by March 2023 or earlier if required by DfT.



Investment and Infrastructure

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Continue to manage the already secured North East LEP funding effectively.

Report quarterly performance monitoring dashboards to the North East LEP Investment Board.

Programme Managers attended and presented performance information and dashboards at six North East LEP Investment Board meetings during 2021/22.

Monitor programme level risks via the Technical Officer Group.

Technical Officer Group Meetings were held prior to each Board to discuss programme performance, risks and outline recommendations ahead of North East LEP Investment Board meetings. The Investment Board papers can be found [here](#) on our website.

Deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) programme including reporting, as required, performance to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Key project infrastructure outputs by 31 March 2022 include:

1. Jarrow Business Centre – manufacturing workspace completion.
2. Gateshead Quays – work to commence on £300 million arena, conference and exhibition centre.
3. East Pilgrim Street, Newcastle – ongoing public realm improvement and Bank House office construction.
4. Pattern shop, Stephenson Quarter – 3,238m² of refurbished commercial floorspace completed.
5. VCSE infrastructure programme – 14 projects completed delivering 10,800sqm of new/refurbished learning space, 262,000sqm of improved green space and 10 community buildings refurbished.
6. Northumberland Energy Park Phase 1 – site reclamation completed – 17 ha of development land and new dock facility.

Bi-annual performance reports have been submitted to government during the year.

Update on key infrastructure projects (numbers below refer to key on left):

1. Construction completed; 740m² of floorspace, first tenant expected by 1 April 2022.
2. Multi-storey car park in construction and enabling works underway with main works contract re-programmed to start during 2022-23. Sage announced as main sponsor by Gateshead Council.
3. Construction of Bank House office in progress, main public realm works re-programmed to commence following works on Bank House completion in Autumn 2022 and to better align to major plans announced for the northern block site and re-development of the fire station into a hotel.
4. Enabling works are completed, main refurbishment contract to commence on site in Q1 2022/2023.
5. The 14 projects are largely delivering to programme, but some delays reported, mainly due to COVID-19. Consequently, eight projects are now planned to complete early in 2022/23.
6. Main contractor works anticipated to be completed by summer 2022. JDR Cables announced plans for a major manufacturing facility on the site with the creation of 170 jobs in 2024.

In addition, we have continued to invest in the nationally important International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) site where a new £450 million gigafactory has been confirmed and is planned to be built by Envision AESC in 2024. In Newcastle works started on the Central Gateway project, commencing with the creation of a new pedestrian entrance to the western dock at Central Station.

<p>Deliver the Getting Building Fund (GBF) programme including quarterly performance monitoring returns to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.</p> <p>Key infrastructure outputs by 31 March 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm improvements in town and city centres totalling 26,229sqm • Construction of new commercial, industrial and retail space totalling 21,200 sqm by 31 March 2022 • Supporting over 1,471 construction jobs • New R&D facilities totalling 3,550sqm • New learning floorspace of 1,137sqm • 1,350 new superfast broadband connections • 175 new jobs created and 170 jobs safeguarded • 4.4km of new or improved roads/cycleways. 	<p>Performance outputs have been below forecast, on most indicators this year due to construction industry challenges, with most projects now planning to be physically completed during 2022/23. Reported construction jobs for the year totalled 643 new jobs created totalling 109 and 1,315sqm of commercial floorspace was completed. Due to price increases and wider challenges in the construction industry three pipeline projects withdrew from the programme. Three projects withdrew from the programme during the year, one due to the project being no longer affordable due to increased construction prices. NU Futures in Newcastle has completed along with phase 1 retail scheme in Bedlington Town Centre. Collectively 127 jobs have been delivered, 3865 sqm of commercial floor space have been upgraded. 6,000 improved public realm/green spaces.</p>
<p>Manage the legacy budget from the LGF programme 2015-21 including £15 million (tbc) programmed to support a mix of revenue and capital projects.</p>	<p>£9.3 million was spent during 2021-22. Several projects have reported slippage into 2022/23. The number of new jobs at the end of the 2021-2022 year was 825. £68.5m for follow on investment has been reported on strategic development sites.</p>
<p>Complete the LGF/Enterprise Zones (EZ) programme independent interim evaluation by 30 June 2021. Complete at least 10 project evaluations, which will be delivered by partners by March 2022.</p>	<p>Interim evaluation of the LGF and EZ programmes, which included six in-depth case studies, reported to the Investment Board and North East LEP Board in September 2021. In addition, four strategic project/mini programme evaluation reports have been received.</p>
<p>Ensure that the Local Assurance Framework is adhered to when making funding decisions by maintaining the operational management structures and decision-making accountabilities within the North East LEP.</p>	<p>All investment decisions made during the financial year were in accordance with the published North East LEP Assurance Framework. The Framework can be accessed here.</p>
<p>Continue to manage the already secured North East LEP funding effectively.</p>	
<p>New businesses to begin operating on the Enterprise Zones, including at Follingsby Max in Gateshead.</p> <p>By March 2022, Enterprise Zone sites to become home to more than 3,000 jobs with the North East LEP investment having been more than £100 million, unlocking more than £210 million of follow-on investment.</p>	<p>Amazon developments on the Follingsby Max EZ site became operational in Autumn 2021 and the site now employs more than 1,300 people. Across all EZ sites, 3,225 jobs have been created across 62 businesses.</p> <p>A cumulative total of £75 million from EZ infrastructure funding has been spent on readying EZ sites for private sector investment. Grant funding has been prioritised this year, ahead of EZ borrowing where sites are receiving both grants and borrowing.</p>

Continued investment from and repayment to the North East Investment Fund to support infrastructure investment in North East LEP area.	There has been continued receipt of the repayments to the North East Investment Fund as well as investments, including the extension of the North East Property Development Fund by £10 million.
Have significant infrastructure works underway or complete on four more EZ sites, that will be ready to secure private sector investment at:	Investment through the North East Property Development Fund has achieved to date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland Energy Park • Port of Sunderland • Ashwood Business Park in Northumberland • Holborn 2 in South Tyneside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39 Investments • 163 residential units • 3,504 sqm • 128 jobs • £11.8m in private sector investment.
Coordinate partners to develop a regional project pipeline based on spatial economic priorities.	
Develop a strategic project pipeline for the North East, building on the work carried out during the development of the Local Industrial Strategy, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan and previous regional pipeline work.	A strategic pipeline has been developed with local authority and transport partners. This will continue to be updated in 2022/23 and supported through the Project Development Accelerator Fund and the Innovation Pipeline prioritisation work.
Facilitate prioritisation of shovel-ready projects through regional collaboration and make preparations for government's future funding announcement including the proposed Shared Prosperity Fund.	Two funding calls were held under the Project Development Accelerator Fund which invited applications from projects that had potential to be implemented in 2023 through successful bidding into government funding programmes.
Manage the second-year budget of £23.5 million of Getting Building Funds (GBF) across the North East. The North East LEP has allocated up to £8 million of additional resources to this programme to add value and to help deliver greater impact.	£23.5 million of GBF budget allocation was fully spent during the financial year. There are 21 live capital projects including six under the Commercial Property Investment Fund pilot scheme. Projects have been managing unprecedented challenges in the construction industry including price increases, capacity constraints, material shortages and COVID-19 disruptions. Despite these challenges, a few projects either completed or completed early phases this year, including phase one of the Bedlington Town Centre re-development scheme, NU Futures' new building in Newcastle and internal highway and quay infrastructure works at Tyne Dock in South Tyneside.

Secure additional investment in the North East including resources to support COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan.

Develop a Project Development Fund to accelerate the volume and quality of shovel-ready projects making use of North East LEP resources (subject to North East LEP Board approval).

The Project Development Accelerator Fund was established during the year with two project calls held to date. 21 strategic projects across the region have been supported with a total investment of £1.8 million.

Work with and support local authorities throughout the year to understand plans to bid for funding from the Levelling Up Fund.

Four Levelling Up Fund bids from local authorities were successful: Durham transport improvement in Bishop Auckland; two in Newcastle for the regeneration of Grainger Market/Old Eldon Square and wellbeing hub in West Denton; and Sunderland Housing Innovation and Construction Skills Academy. To better position the region for future Levelling Up Fund rounds, funding has been awarded to several prospective projects through the Project Development Accelerator Fund.

Deliver the final development phase of the Commercial Property Investment Fund (CPIF) and launch the fund.

Procurement of the Commercial Property Investment Fund (CPIF) Fund Manager progresses with the Fund Manager expected to be appointed in Spring 2022.

We will:

The launch of the CPIF programme will take place following the appointment of the Fund Manager.

- Procure a CPIF Fund Manager between April 2021 and January 2022
- Launch the CPIF programme in March 2022
- Contract several new CPIF pilot programme projects between April and August 2021, with resources from the Getting Building Fund to be delivered by March 2022
- Continue to develop the pipeline of projects throughout the year to maximize take-up once the fund is live.

A total of six projects have received funding from the GBF-funded pilot:

- Portland House
- Airview Park
- Bessemar Court
- The Former Gilbridge Police Station
- Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate Unit 6
- Panther Court, Drum Industrial Estate.

A pipeline of potential CPIF projects remains under development in preparation for the launch of the new CPIF in Spring 2022.

Continue to maximise national reserve funding from the European Structural Investment Funding and ensure the full reserve allocation is delivered within the region.

The Government has focused allocation of reserve funds on activity relating to COVID-19 recovery, and the North East has received additional funds for Growth Hub activity and high street investment via the local authorities.

Increased access to finance for businesses to invest.

Work with the North East Fund Ltd. to maximise its investment potential for North East SMEs.

Targets:

- £120 million of funding invested
- 635 initial investments
- 600 different SMEs supported.

Develop and deliver a regional Access to Finance programme, which will look at supply and demand within the region and consider the development of the successor to the North East Fund Ltd. Continue to support North East Finance and North East Access to Finance to optimise use of legacy funding to support North East initiatives.

The North East Fund has completed 364 investments, investing £76 million to date. The fund has now provided financial support to 349 different SMEs.

A strategy for maintaining a regional investment fund is being developed to ensure that there is no period between the current programme and any future provision, including the government announcement through Comprehensive Spending Review of the British Business Bank-led new £660 million investment fund for northern LEPs.

Broader work on the Access to Finance programme (to include supply and demand potential support requirements) continues as we assess the current supply and demand for finance by SMEs in the region and liaise with potential fund managers to further understand their offer.

Strategy, policy, evidence and analysis

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Building and encouraging use of the evidence base.

Strengthen our research, evidence and analysis programme by:

- Supporting the North East LEP's delivery programmes (Strategic Economic Plan, COVID-19, sectors) and external stakeholders to improve the evidence and analysis underpinning their work
- Coordinating a corporate approach to data licences, tools, procurement, and visualisation
- Developing tools, advice and support to ensure North East LEP teams and stakeholders can operate to best practice standards in research, analysis and evaluation. Examples include standardisation of quality questions, support with writing research specifications, and developing 'how to' guides for using the North East Evidence Hub.

Strengthen communication and dissemination of key strategy, policy data and research findings by:

- Reviewing and developing the North East Evidence Hub as a key platform for regional evidence and analysis, and implementing a marketing plan to increase engagements and usage of the site by 100% from 2,500 yearly visitors to 5,000
- Enhancing the North East LEP's commentary on key economic issues and evidence in priority areas
- Delivering the Our Economy programme
- Producing commentary pieces on key pieces of data and analysis, including the main and programme targets identified in the North East Strategic Economic Plan, and priority strategy and policy themes.

- We continue to support teams within the North East LEP and external stakeholders on data, research and evidence activities. Particular projects have included analysis of trade and export data, our areas of strategic importance to inform the ongoing strategy work, COVID-19 intelligence, research exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the Good Work Agenda and flexible working, and digital exclusion in the North East LEP area.
- Reviewing all corporate data licences to ensure they meet the needs of the LEP and our partners is ongoing – with consideration being made to value, usage and budgets.
- Refinement of our processes has been a priority during 2021/22, with key activities to support best practice research and analysis including:
 - Appointing a data specialist to develop a corporate data strategy to support collation, analysis and visualisation of both internal and external data
 - Taking the decision and securing funding to re-platform the North East Evidence Hub to allow for the presentation of research alongside data outputs, allowing more functionality, flexibility and the incorporation of tools such as Power BI, Map Box and analytical software such as R. (the re-platforming decision is why the how to guides were not progressed)
- Standardising our approach to procurement through a cross North East LEP working group.
- The North East Evidence Hub received 6,878 visitors between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. General engagement with the hub has increased, but technical issues and development frustrations led to the decision to re-platform the site as a priority during 2021/22.
- We have produced analysis and commentary about topics such as the local labour market, regional trade and exports, and retail and recreation footfall using Google mobility data.
- Our Economy 2021, which consisted of our annual state of the region report and a summative assessment of the impact of COVID-19 and the EU transition, was published on 7 October. An online event launch was held, with 147 people in attendance.
- We have produced briefings and commentary about fiscal and policy events, including the Budget and comprehensive spending review, the Levelling Up white paper and Net Zero strategy. We have launched and commented on our North East trade strategy (Global North East: Driving growth in North East trade and exports) and comment regularly on the ONS data release linked to the North East Strategic Economic Plan.

Drive forward collaboration in research and data by:

- Coordinating the North East Economic Evidence Forum and strengthening the group as a recognised platform for the discussion, collaboration and development of the regional evidence base
 - Working with North East universities to build the quality and quantity of research projects to support regional economic development and to help secure new sources of investment
 - Working with the NP11, Transport for the North and other northern and national partners to define a collaborative approach which can enhance the North East's access to evidence and data.
- The North East Economic Evidence Forum has met three times during 2021/22 and agreed priorities for regional evidence base development activity, which included the impact of COVID-19, Levelling Up, innovation in communities, and engagement with the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review. We hosted speakers from Durham University and Transport for North and have set up a subgroup to review the government's proposed metrics regarding the Levelling Up white paper.
 - We supported the recently awarded bid to Research England for the Insights North East project, led by Newcastle University, which will create opportunities to strengthen academic engagement with regional policy and strategy processes through enhancing our regional evidence base. We have continued to strengthen our collaborative research relationship with Durham University having taken forward a number of projects, such as a review of the impact of COVID-19 on the Good Work Agenda, and hosting a PhD student placement to support our COVID-19 intelligence. We are exploring opportunities for future funding and collaborations such as policy fellowships.
 - We've continued to work with partners to enhance access to evidence and data, including:
 - We are represented on the North East and Yorkshire Regional Productivity Forum, established as part of the ESRC-funded Productivity Institute and led by a consortium of UK universities to explore the issue of the UK's underperformance on productivity. The priorities of the institute are to develop a programme of research and analytical projects to understand productivity issues and challenges in the two regions.
 - On behalf of the NP11 group of Northern LEPs and Transport for the North - working with a Steering Group from other LEPs and Mayoral Combined Authorities - the North East LEP commissioned Metro Dynamics to report on opportunities to strengthen the pan-northern economic evidence base to support strategy development and policy. The report has been well received by the NP11 Board and government, and proposed the creation of a Northern Evidence Network (NEN). The NEN is exploring plans for data sharing and development, commissioning of evidence, and joint work with ONS and other agencies to improve regional data and support for northern level policy and strategy.
 - Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER): Through the NEN network, we have co-ordinated local input into the early stage of the update of the NPIER with Transport for the North to ensure this key document accurately reflects local economic circumstances.

New strategy projects

- Continue to scan the environment for the North East region and the North East LEP region, and determine approaches to identified opportunities and challenges
- Monitor development of planning policy and the work of the National Infrastructure Commission to identify issues and opportunities for the North East
- Develop a proposal for a mapping tool utilising GIS systems across the region to strengthen tools supporting development
- Develop and deliver an Advanced Manufacturing strategy
- Continue to support tourism partners to develop a strategic approach to recovery and future growth and development of the sector, including:
 - The development of a statement of intent
 - Responding to the review of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)
 - Prepare for a future sector vision and possible Action Zone
- Develop a framework for North East LEP action to address inclusion and inequality in the region
- Ensure collaborative structures and work programmes are in place for agreed policy activity and to share intelligence between partners including ongoing support for the Economic Prospects Group working with the Bank of England.

Spatial and infrastructure development activity

Following on from publication of the National Infrastructure Assessment, we are supporting a number of key areas of activity linked to spatial and infrastructure development:

Cabinet Office Geo-spatial strategy: The North East LEP continues to support work being progressed in the region on the National Underground Asset Assessment, as part of the UK Geo-spatial strategy led by the Cabinet Office. The project will deliver a full mapping of the region's underground infrastructure, helping to strengthen co-ordination of development and manage disruption. A specification for consultants has been developed by the steering group including local government, utilities, the North East LEP and environmental bodies. Once in place the data could potentially provide a context for a range of data and resilience-based interventions and innovations.

We have met with Land Registry who are moving forward a second related piece of work to develop the Local Land Charges (LLC) programme, bringing together LLC data previously held by local authorities in different formats throughout England and Wales into a single digital and geospatial dataset which will enable swifter access to data and facilitate digital innovation using the data. County Durham is one of the pilot areas for this project and there is a possibility to accelerate the project across the other local authority areas in the region.

Advanced Manufacturing: Development of the Advanced Manufacturing strategy is underway with a full review of evidence due to be completed by October 2022. A project plan has been developed to take the strategy development forward, and will formally establish the Advanced Manufacturing Steering group before the end of quarter four 2021/22.

Tourism: Regional partners have developed a Statement of Intent as a framework for joint working, building on the collaboration which underpinned the Tourism Action Zone preparation work in 2020/21 and this was presented to the North East LEP Board in September 2021. North East DMOs and the North East LEP responded to the review of DMOs, including hosting a workshop in the region on June 9 2021 with Nick de Bois, Chair of Visit England and of the review. Following publication of the review on September 14, the region's DMOs wrote to the new Secretary of State to emphasise support for its full implementation. Work is underway to take forward the statement of intent including actions on skills, events and regional support for the Durham City of Culture bid, whilst aiming to demonstrate our potential to be a pilot or pathfinder Destination Development Partnership (DDP) envisaged in the review if that opportunity arises. The group is also preparing a proposal for a set of regional products to enhance the scale and quality of the regional offer including itineraries, sustainability and internationally focused products.

Inclusion and inequality: Discussions have been ongoing throughout the year to understand the North East LEP's inclusion agenda and how this relates to partners in the region. An assessment of key data showing the nature of exclusion within the North East has been completed as has an analysis of current action across the region. We have joined the LA7 Inclusive Economy Network, led by South Tyneside Council and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, to share information, resources and best practice on the development of inclusive economy policies across the North East.

Co-ordination of economic intelligence: The Economic Prospects Group continues to meet monthly. It shares information and data between partners, helping to inform the Bank of England regional agents' inputs to national level and comparing intelligence to enhance a shared view of issues in the North East economy.

Coordinating and supporting on regional strategy and policy projects.

Net Zero

- Develop an evidence base with government and partners to demonstrate plausible pathways towards Net Zero in the North East
 - Work with partners across the region to build activities to accelerate regional action towards Net Zero, developing a more sustainable and resilient economy and natural environment
 - Co-ordinate work within the North East LEP to accelerate the drive towards Net Zero.
- Significant work has been done with the region to develop an evidence base, identify areas for action and future opportunities for the North East's journey towards Net Zero. A steering group was established, who have agreed a plan to bring together business, local authorities, environmental leaders and the North East Climate Coalition into a regional collaboration programme - Net Zero North East.
 - We continued to work regionally and nationally on this agenda by:
 - Supporting government on the development of their regional report. Published on 19 December, it models the economic impact of the transition to Net Zero in the North East and Tees Valley.
 - We have enabled the delivery of the Green Homes Grants Local Authority Delivery programme, and Rural Community Energy Fund. We are working with partners to prepare for delivery of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Skills Fund in 2022/23, and preparing for the transition of the North East and Yorkshire Local Energy Hub to a Net Zero hub that will provide sub-national point of co-ordination for work across the Net Zero agenda
 - Continuing to work on the next stages of the Mine Energy white paper, in addition to developing solutions to the barriers set out in the white paper.
 - Supporting the development of the Environmental Leaders Network, which is led by the Environment Agency, as a collaborative platform for work on the environment in the region
 - Working with teams within the North East LEP to take forward projects on decarbonisation and Net Zero, for example, by securing resources from the Local Energy Hub to support the analysis of future skills needs for green jobs, and to drive forward work on geo-thermal energy.
-

Internationalisation

- Publish the North East Trade and Export Strategy
 - Work with other northern LEPs and the Department for International Trade to ensure that future national and Northern Powerhouse strategies respond to the North East strategy
 - Through a second phase of work, strengthen the evidence base and develop specific proposals identified in the strategy, including:
 - Target exporter development at firm level
 - Align and promote views of market opportunity for the North East with northern, UK and overseas services
 - Define and agree approaches to develop and strengthen the export support ecosystem
 - Improve communication and promote collaboration to enhance trade and exporting.
 - Strengthen the alignment between international facing activities in the region, between trade, inward investment, innovation and higher education.
- [Global North East: Driving growth in North East trade and exports](#) was published on 21 June. It sets out a place-based strategy to improve trade and exports in the context of wider internationalisation of the North East economy
 - The report was presented to the national Department for International Trade (DIT) team working on the UK Trade strategy, North East members of parliament, and at DIT workshops as part of UK Trade Week. Work continues with the Northern Powerhouse to support the development of northern propositions and trade missions and ensure alignment and ongoing conversations about resourcing delivery.
 - A second report that identifies proposals for implementation across workstreams including intelligence, business support, communication to target markets, regional networking and stakeholder management, and strengthened links between internationally facing action has also been completed.
 - Full implementation of these reports is being discussed between the North East LEP and the Department for International Trade as the UK Trade strategy is moved forward, including the development of proposals for targeting markets across international functions including trade, inward investment, and science.

Devolution

- Monitor and respond to developments in national government policy relating to devolution, including the LEP review and Levelling Up white paper
 - Support regional partners to secure and implement additional devolution to the region.
- We've worked with the LEP Network and government to:
 - Inform the LEP Review, leading nationally on key work streams, which has led to government reinforcing the role of LEPs to lead economic development.
 - Influence content of the Levelling Up white paper, in particular supporting greater regional devolution and the positive contribution LEPs make.
 - We remain poised to support local and combined authority partners to maximise devolved powers and funding to the region, having prepared the economic evidence material to inform the strategic business case and having the knowledge and experience to shape the regional programmes required to grow the economy.
-

EU Exit

Through the EU Exit Implementation Group, we will:

- Continue to monitor the impact of new trade arrangements with the EU and report intelligence and insights to government and the North East LEP team
- Working with the group and sector representatives, produce a report on the impact of EU Exit on key North East sectors
- Provide a platform for joint consideration of future internationalisation approaches for the North East in the context of new trade deals and international policy
- Update the evidence base with the latest data about the opportunities and challenges for businesses and sectors
- Identify opportunities and challenges arising from post-EU Exit domestic policy, and co-ordinate regional response as required. Focus areas to include the labour market, funding, and regulation.

Through the EU Exit Implementation Group, we have:

- Continued to monitor aspects of implementation through the Trade Agreement, in domestic policy, and report on issues impacting on the region. This intelligence from the group has been fed through the North East Growth Hub reporting framework and the Economic Prospects Group
- Commenced the development of a report that summarises the impact of EU Exit on key North East sectors that will be published in the early summer of 2022
- Considered future internationalisation approaches for the North East by inviting the Department for International Trade's regional lead to the August 2021 meeting, where they provided an update on Free Trade Agreement negotiations. The group has continued to update its understanding of sectoral opportunities and challenges, and we updated the quantitative data for key sectors and areas such as labour and migration
- Coordinated responses with the support of the group to the Migration Advisory Committee's call for evidence on the impact of the end of free movement on the adult social care workforce and the Department for BEIS consultation on subsidy control
- Responded to the Department for International Trade's consultation on trade between the UK and the Gulf Cooperation Council on behalf of the group and regional stakeholders.

Northern Powerhouse

- Through the Northern Powerhouse Co-ordination Group, ensure there is a regional response to the development of the Northern Powerhouse agenda across transport, economic development, energy, and intelligence workstreams
- Co-ordinate North East LEP engagement with the NP11
- Working with NP11, Transport for the North and other partners, lead the development of a project to assess the opportunities to strengthen the evidence base about the northern economy.

- We are represented in priority areas across the Northern Powerhouse agenda and been an active member of the Co-ordination Group. The group has provided intelligence updates on transport, energy, and innovation workstreams, and engaged with partners across the north of England and co-ordinated submissions to the Autumn Budget and Spending Review.
- We commissioned Metro Dynamics, on behalf of the NP11, to explore the value of a Northern Evidence Network to help facilitate co-operation across the north in data and evidence development. The report was well received, and we will take a leading role in the implementation of a Northern Evidence Network.

New strategy projects

- Continue to scan the environment for the North East region and the North East LEP region, and determine approaches to identified opportunities and challenges
- Monitor development of planning policy and the work of the National Infrastructure Commission to identify issues and opportunities for the North East
- Develop a proposal for a mapping tool utilising GIS systems across the region to strengthen tools supporting development
- Develop and deliver an Advanced Manufacturing strategy
- Continue to support tourism partners to develop a strategic approach to recovery, future growth, and development of the sector, including:
 - The development of a statement of intent
 - Responding to the review of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)
 - Prepare for a future sector vision and possible Action Zone
- Develop a framework for North East LEP action to address inclusion and inequality in the region
- Ensure collaborative structures and work programmes are in place for agreed policy activity and to share intelligence between partners, including ongoing support for the Economic Prospects Group working with the Bank of England.

Work continues on a number of other key areas of activity:

- Cabinet Office Geo-spatial strategy: The North East LEP continues to support work being progressed in the region on the National Underground Asset Assessment as part of the UK Geo-spatial strategy led by the Cabinet Office. The project will deliver a full understanding of the region's underground infrastructure, helping to strengthen coordination of development and manage disruption. A specification for consultants has been developed by the Steering Group, including local government, utilities, the North East LEP and environmental bodies. Once in place, the data could potentially provide a context for a range of data and resilience-based interventions and innovations.
- We have met with Land Registry who are moving forward a second related piece of work to develop the Local Land Charges (LLC) programme, bringing together LLC data previously held by local authorities in different formats throughout England and Wales into a single digital and geospatial dataset that will enable swifter access to data and facilitate digital innovation using the data. County Durham is one of the pilot areas for this project and there is a possibility to accelerate the project across the other local authority areas in the region.
- Detailed work on the delivery of the Advanced Manufacturing strategy is underway with a full review of evidence being completed and the membership of leadership structures being developed. The first meeting of a Steering Group will consider the evidence base and develop the plan of action for the strategy.
- Regional tourism partners have developed a Statement of Intent as a framework for joint working, building on the collaboration which underpinned the Tourism Action Zone preparation work in 2020/21. This was presented to the North East LEP Board in September 2021. North East destination management organisations (DMOs) and the North East LEP responded to the review of DMOs, including hosting a workshop in the region on 9 June 2021 with Nick de Bois, Chair of VisitEngland and of the review. Following publication of the review on 14 September 2021, the region's DMOs wrote to the new Secretary of State to emphasise support for its full implementation. In the meantime, work is underway to take forward the Statement of Intent including actions on skills, events and regional support for the Durham City of Culture bid, whilst aiming to demonstrate our potential to be a pilot or pathfinder DPP if that opportunity arises. The group is also preparing a proposal for a set of regional products to enhance the scale and quality of the regional offer, including itineraries, sustainability, and internationally focused products, building on the work done for the Tourism Action Zone bid.
- Discussions have been ongoing throughout the year to understand the North East LEP's inclusion agenda and how this relates to partners in the region. An assessment of key data showing the nature of exclusion within the North East has been completed, as has an analysis of current action across the region. We have joined the LA7 Inclusive Economy Network, led by South Tyneside Council and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, to share information, resources and best practice on the development of inclusive economy policies across the North East.
- The Economic Prospects Group continues to meet monthly. It shares information and data between partners, helping to inform the Bank of England regional agents' inputs to national level, and comparing intelligence to enhance a shared view of issues in the North East economy. Key issues highlighted through the year include the impact in changes in costs and inflation on the economy, the strength of the inward investment pipeline, and challenges in the labour market.

North East LEP public policy actions

- Continue to brief the North East LEP Board on future policy priorities
- Further develop the approach to public policy set down in March 2021 following the outcome of LEP review process
- Complete stakeholder mapping exercise and identify priority audiences for public policy messaging.

The LEP Board has been briefed on public policy developments including key fiscal events the budget and comprehensive spending review, the Levelling Up white paper and Net Zero and trade strategies

- The Levelling Up white paper provided the context for the high-level government response to the LEP Review, with the future direction of policy likely to see LEPs integrating into Mayoral Combined Authorities. In expectation of further development of North East governance, we have developed our evidence base to include analysis of the economic geography of the region. We are also preparing to work closely with colleagues in Combined and Local Authorities on future devolution programmes
- A stakeholder mapping exercise was completed to identify key ministerial and civil service stakeholders for LEP programmes and forthcoming government policy. Work is ongoing to co-ordinate stakeholder engagement across the LEP, and to review national policy developments that affect LEP strategies. It has been acknowledged that an effective CRM is required to implement this fully across the organisation.

Coordinating corporate and regional strategy development.

Work with the Board to agree a strategic approach to future regional economic strategy development including:

- Baseline and updating the economic evidence base in preparation for an update of the North East Strategic Economic Plan and/or other strategic processes
- Evaluate and implement the approach required at regional level to respond to Government's Plan for Growth
- Prepare to support an economic review project in advance of any future devolution process.

The updating of the North East Strategic Economic Plan is directly linked to the LEP review, government's Levelling Up white paper, and the regional devolution agenda. We continue to prepare and update our economic evidence base ready to respond to the regional economic agenda, including producing Our Economy as our annual analysis of the performance of the regional economy.

We have reviewed the executive summary of the Strategic Economic Plan and are ready to begin to prepare for the next iteration of the Strategic Economic Plan as the regional devolution story and national growth policy becomes clearer.

Support and coordinate activities which support the immediate and longer-term economic response to COVID-19 including:

- Continuing publication of the evidence base
- Support for the actions derived from the North East COVID-19 Economic Response Group and the Economic Response Plan
- Evaluate, and support discussion about, the impact of the North East COVID-19 Response Group to support future regional resilience.

Monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on the regional economy has continued to be a priority theme as part of our ongoing evidence base.

- The North East COVID-19 Economic Response Group continues to meet, but has been designated as the North East Regional Economy Group, providing the point of coordination across economic partners to oversee the update of future economic plans as we move through the post-pandemic recovery phase.

Support the alignment and development of strategic processes led by partners including the North East Transport Plan.

The North East Transport Plan has been the priority during 2021/22. It has now been published and was developed in partnership and in alignment to the North East Strategic Economic Plan. Future actions will be incorporated into the annual delivery plan.

Governance

Key deliverables – what we will deliver between April 2021 and March 2022

Progress

Continue to embed the LEP Review recommendations and develop a system of good governance.

Update and agree the North East LEP Constitution at the May 2021 North East LEP Board.	No changes were needed this year. The Constitution can be read here .
Hold a public Annual General Meeting.	A public Annual General Meeting was held virtually on 25 January 2022. The presentation slides for the meeting can be found here and it was attended virtually by 316 people.
Update the Assurance Framework in January 2022.	The North East LEP Assurance Framework was reviewed, updated and published here in September 2021 following the publication of the National Local Growth Assurance Framework v.4.
Establish an informal Chair and Sub Board Chairs' group to improve cross programme work and meet on a two monthly basis.	The Cross Chairs Meeting has met on a two monthly basis and has ensured that cross programme working has been able to progress delivery. Each meeting has focused on a different programme or LEP update as directed by the group, as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectors update and next steps • Communications strategy • Innovation and innovation delivery partnerships • Skills employment, inclusion and progression programme overview • Development of the North East Strategic Economic Plan executive summary and next steps.
Complete a review of the North East LEP's decision-making process, provide a detailed briefing to the team and ensure the information is accessible for reference.	Internal decision-making processes have been updated through training and guidance with the North East LEP team. This includes a review of how we capture decisions to inform best practice and ensure accessibility for reference, and report to the senior leadership team.
Complete an annual review of the sub board membership and update Terms of Reference.	The membership update was held in abeyance pending the outcome of the LEP Review and will be updated during 2022/23.
Encourage engagement with North East LEP corporate documents - increase downloads of the North East Strategic Economic Plan, Annual Review and Our Economy by 10%.	Downloads of the full North East Strategic Economic Plan increased from 883 to 1,033 from 12 months previous - this is an increase of 20%. Downloads of the North East Strategic Economic Plan executive summary increased from 357 to 694 for the same period the previous year - an increase of 61%.

Increase both followers and engagements on Twitter and LinkedIn by 15% from the following baseline figures:

Twitter followers: 12,376

LinkedIn followers: 3,889

Engagements over the year: 5,604

Twitter followers are currently 12,927. LinkedIn followers stand at 9,843 and engagements over the year were 4,978.

Continue the evaluation of the North East Strategic Economic Plan delivery.

Continue to work with Steer Economic Development consultants to deliver and finalise the interim external evaluation of the North East Strategic Economic Plan. During 2020/21 they will deliver the specific actions agreed as part of the programme for the year including:

- Delivering a strategic case study of the impact and strategic added value of the work of the COVID-19 Economic Response Group
- Undertaking a targeted review of the Local Growth Fund programme as it enters its closing phases
- Carrying out the next phase of assessment and stakeholder consultations for the programmes of delivery and areas of strategic importance
- Examining the impact of cross-cutting activities of the North East LEP including communications and strategy and policy
- Assessing the impact of new developments at national level, in particular the publication of the revised Green Book.

We finalised the interim external evaluation of the SEP in December 2021. The executive summary and supporting blog was published and the findings were presented to the LEP Board. As part of this activity, Steer-ED completed:

- Detailed case study on how the regional COVID-19 Economic Response Group and the North East Growth Hub responded to the pandemic
- The interim evaluation of the Local Growth Fund and Enterprise Zone programmes, which was published in February 2022.
- Updated programme logic models, quantitative and qualitative analysis on the Strategic Economic Plan, programmes of delivery and areas of strategic importance.
- Assessed the North East LEP's strategic added value in relation to leadership, influence, synergy and engagement through deep dive cases across our teams.
- Supported the North East LEP team to understand the relevant changes within the revised Green Book and how we should approach the final evaluation of the Strategic Economic Plan. A draft framework of this activity was provided alongside the final interim evaluation report.

Prepare and complete the final report of the three-year interim evaluation project. The final report will also make recommendations on the future evaluation framework in relation to the final evaluation of the North East Strategic Economic Plan (2014 – 2024).

The interim evaluation reports on actions that the North East LEP will need to take to prepare for final evaluation in 2025. A summary of the evaluation was published on 27 January 2022 [here](#).

Scope out the framework and specification for the final evaluation of the North East Strategic Economic Plan to be contracted up to 2024.

A draft framework of the final evaluation of the North East Strategic Economic Plan was produced as part of the interim evaluation activity. Due to the delays in finalising the interim activity, the development of the specification for the final evaluation will be completed in 2022.

North East
Local Enterprise Partnership



North East Local Enterprise Partnership

1 St James Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4AD | **Tel** 0191 561 5420 | **Email** info@nelep.co.uk |  [@northeastlep](https://twitter.com/northeastlep)



northeastlep.co.uk



North East
GrowthHub

northeastgrowthhub.co.uk



North East
Evidence Hub

evidencehub.northeastlep.co.uk



North East
Ambition

northeastambition.co.uk